

TRIBUTE ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS ASSOCIATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HORN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, for the past half century the members of the National Press Photographers Association have shared memorable, moving, and information images with our Nation and the world. In the process, they have documented the last half of the 20th century with photographs and pictures that have made us smile and others that have wrenched our hearts.

Who can forget the sight of man's first step on the Moon or the jubilation of the United States hockey team's victory over the sport-dominating Soviet Union in the 1980 Olympics; the newly widowed Jacqueline Kennedy holding the hand of a young John F. Kennedy, Jr.; and, especially memorable, the five marines and the Navy corpsman raising the American flag on Iwo Jima?

These images and so many more like them have defined our perceptions of history. They are the press photographers' gifts to all of us.

To provide us with these memories, press photographers have often accepted great physical risks—even the possibility of death—to be the eyes and ears of the American public and the public throughout the world. Their dedication is to be admired.

On the 50th anniversary of the National Press Photographers Association, I join with this Nation in saying, "Thank you for all that you have given us."

In the true spirit of the National Press Photographers Association, members have been working to ensure that we continue to be the recipients of the informative and instructional nature of their work, especially in times of disaster and emergency.

Through their experience, they know of the necessity for a harmonious working relationship between the public safety and the journalistic communities so that accurate, even lifesaving information, can be passed on very quickly to the waiting public. It is through this goal that the National Press Photographers Association created the "National Media Guide for Emergency & Disaster Incidents" which has been just published.

Laws can easily be based on this document, and we will be very carefully looking at them at the national level. I would hope that State legislatures would also look at the guidelines that have been made available for the use of police chiefs, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officers.

They have brought together, with the collaboration of over 100 media and public safety representatives throughout the United States, this National Media Guide, which reflects the best

public information procedures from police, fire, and other emergency providers across America. It is a compilation of guidelines developed by highly experienced individuals, which ensure that journalists and public safety officials can work quickly and efficiently to keep the public informed in disaster situations.

I am delighted that Bob Riha, Jr., a photographer for USA Today in the West, who lives in Long Beach, is the cochair of the National Press Photographers Association Police-Fire-Press Relations Committee. He is joined, as cochair, by David Handschuh, staff photographer with the New York Daily News.

By working together, these leaders of the photographers, the media, the public safety representatives can all help benefit and enhance our images and the public information possibilities in the case of emergencies and disasters. This Nation has had many in recent years. Earthquakes, floods, fires, tornadoes, typhoons, you name it, we have had them all. There is a need for such guidelines, when it comes to saving lives and property.

Mr. Chairman, I salute this effort. I congratulate the National Press Photographers Association for its continuing efforts to keep the public informed. There is a community spirit that is enviable and a dedication to duty that is an inspiration. What they have provided for us is a basis for law that will assure that the public's right to know is fulfilled in this land.

Mr. Speaker, I attach a summary of the "National Media Guide" whose ideas should interest Federal and State legislators and those public officials involved in the media coverage of the emergency activities related to a disaster.

NATIONAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR EMERGENCY & DISASTER INCIDENTS

FOREWORD

Throughout the United States, public safety agencies have standard operating procedures to guide operations during emergencies and disasters. Some of these identify policies and procedures to use when news media are at the scene of an incident. Laws and policies will vary agency to agency and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Media access laws and procedures used in California or New York, may not be legal or utilized in other states. When media representatives are denied access to an emergency or disaster scene, the flow of information to the public is restricted. During certain emergencies, such as hazardous materials incidents, the flow of information to the public could be a matter of life or death.

In 1994, the National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) appointed photo-journalists Bob Riha, Jr., in Long Beach and David Handschuh in New York as Co-Chairs of NPPA's Police-Fire-Press Relations Committee. Their assignment was to write a guidance document for journalists and public safety officials to use during emergencies. NPPA is a non-profit professional organization of more than 10,000 members worldwide including news photographers, television camera operators, freelance photographers and editors.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the National Media Guide are to:

Establish Standard Operating Procedures nationally for media & public safety representatives that respond to emergency and disaster incidents—taking into consideration specific needs both sides have to do their jobs effectively.

Establish media access guidelines and criteria for media access to emergency, investigation and crime scene areas.

Education media representatives & public safety officials on proper media access procedures and address problem areas and give solutions to those problems.

Develop a guidebook which could be used at journalism colleges & universities including public safety training academies to educate 'rookie' journalists & officials on how to work with each other during emergencies.

Develop a guidance document to assist Public Information Officers.

NATIONAL MEDIA GUIDE

The National Media Guide for Emergency & Disaster Incidents is a 90-page document that contains guidelines for media and public safety representatives that respond to emergency & disaster incidents. The guidebook contains guidelines for media representatives, local agencies, state agencies and the Federal Government. It was written with contributions from over 100 media and public safety representatives nationwide. Advisors contacted for this document came from all regions of the United States including: Hawaii, California, Washington, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Minnesota, Texas, Kentucky, Florida, New York, Utah, Iowa, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Maryland, Indiana and New Hampshire.

TOPICS

The National Media Guide for Emergency & Disaster Incidents contains information on many subjects including:

Media Identification, Barrier Tape Guidelines, Command Post/Media Information Centers, Private Property Considerations, Wildland Fire Incidents, National Transportation Safety Board Incidents, Undercover Incidents, Media and The Military, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Media Vehicle Identification, Media Access Photo Sites, Media Access, Hazardous Materials Incidents, Special Weapons/Tactics Team, Bomb Squad Incidents, Media Aircraft Guidelines, Media Access into Indian Lands, U.S. Department of Justice.

CONCLUSION

The National Media Guide points out that: Nationally, only California and Ohio have Statutory Laws for media access into emergency & disaster scenes. California has PC409.5(D); Ohio has PC2917.13(B).

Media representatives are identified by possessing a media identification card issued by local law enforcement agency or an identification card issued by the media organization. Authorized media representatives work for bona-fide, news gathering media organizations. Public safety agencies should have a policy of accepting media identification issued from agencies outside their immediate jurisdiction.

Coordination with the media, especially radio and television are essential in informing the public during emergencies and major disasters. Use of media notification sources can assist 1st responders at the scene in dispersing emergency instructions and information in the shortest amount of time.

Training is needed for journalists, public safety representatives and Public Information Officers that respond to emergency and disaster incidents within the United States.

The public has a Right-To-Know and demands information during emergencies.